

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 HAVANA 00636 100148Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----045789 100154Z /64

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FM USINT HAVANA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1354
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T HAVANA 0636

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: H3N PINT SO CU
SUBJ: SOMALI WITHDRAWAL FROM OGADEN

REF: STATE 61122

A1. FONMIN MALMIERCA DEPARTED ON AFRICAN TRIP TODAY MARCH 9.
ACTING FONMIN TORRAS RECEIVED ME AT 6:30 PM.. FORTY-FIVE MINUTES
AFTER WE RECEIVED REFTEL. R RELAYD SUBSTANCE OF REFTEL POINT
BY POINT, AFTER WHICH HE ACCURATELY RECAPITULATED IT ALTHOUGH
HE DID NOT TAKE WRITTEN NOTES. HE ASSURED ME THAT HE WOULD PASS
THE MESSAGE TO HIGHER AUTHORITY.

2. WHILE NOT PURPORTING TO RESPOND DEFINITELY TO OUR DEMARCHE,
TORRAS OFFERED FOLLOWING PERSONAL COMMENTS:

A. DECISIONS ON OUR PROPOSALS WOULD HAVE TO BE TAKEN BY ETHIOPIAN
GOVERNMENT ITSELF, NOT CUBA.

B. GIVEN THE BLATANT NATURE OF SOMALI AGGRESSION IN OGADEN AND
FAILURE OF OTHER POWERS (READ U.S.) TO TAKE AS ENERGETIC A
POSUTRE AGAINST IT AT OUTSET AS THEY ARE TAKING NOW, IT MAY BE
DIFFICULT FOR ETHIOPIANS TO ACCEPT CEASEFIRE AND PRESENCE OF
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NEUTRAL OBSERVORS AT THIS LATE DATE.

C. IN ANY CASE, ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT HAS ALREADY GIVEN PUBLIC
ASSURANCES THAT IT WILL NOT CROSS SOMALI FRONTIER AND THAT IT
WILL NOT PERMIT MISTREATMENT OF OGADEN POPULATION.

D. WITH RESPECT TO CONTINUED CUBAN MILITARY PRESENCE, THIS ALSO

WILL DEPEND ON WISHES OF ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT WHICH, IN VIEW OF OTHER THREATS TO ITS SECURITY (WE MENTIONED KENYA BUT NOT ERITREA) AND CONTINUED NEED TO TRAIN ITS FORCES, MAY WISH TO RETAIN CUBAN FORCES EVEN AFTER OGADEN IS SECURED.

3. I OF COURSE URGED ON TORRAS THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR PROPOSALS IN THE INTERESTS OF SECURITY A NEGOTIATED AND LASTING SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM, AND REPEATED THAT WE HOPED CUBA WOULD SUPPORT THEM. TORRAS WOULD MAKE NO OTHER COMMENT.

4. I ALSO ALLUDED TO THE AFP REPORT OF MALMERCA'S TRIP TO ETHIOPIA, AND SUGGESTED THAT HE WOULD BE IN AN EXCELLENT POSITION TO TAKE UP OUR PROPOSALS THERE. TORRAS SAID THAT IT WAS NOT YET SURE THAT THE MINISTER WOULD BE VISITING ETHIOPIA ON HIS AFRICAN TRIP, BUT THAT I COULD BE SURE THAT OUR DEMARCHE WOULD BE COMMUNICATED TO HIM.

5. COMMENT: WHILE I HAVE DOUBTS THAT CUBANS WILL SUPPORT OUR PROPOSALS ENTHUSIASTICALLY IF AT ALL, I BELIEVE THAT IT WAS USEFUL TO APPROACH THEM. IF OUR PAST DECISION TO OPEN A DIRECT DIALOGUE ON ISSUES BETWEEN US IS TO HAVE ANY MEANING, WE MUST AT LEAST PLAY OUR PART. WE NOW AT LEAST HAVE SOME STANDING TO FOLLOW UP WITH GOC. LATER IF EVOLVING SITUATION WARRANTS.

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